

and got a decent job and bought a home.
he probably voted for eisenhower, but would
never vote for george wallace. his hair
is thinning but he hasn't gotten fat and slow.

his women are mostly in their thirties and early
forties, the ones who still look good in
blouses and capris, especially after you've
put down a few beers. sometimes a college

chick will search him out but he doesn't
usually invade the frat-boys territory -- he
had his share of nubile maidens when he was
that age himself. he doesn't look for trouble.

outside the hippies sit on the front steps of
the bookstore. he doesn't pay them much
attention. they have their thing and he
has his, and theirs isn't his, nor his theirs.

don't answer the phone for me the same
as for your ex-boyfriends, dig?
eschew that little cry of surprise
which suggests: someone else is here with me.

save it for pete, who writes such
execrable verses and who pretends
to be your friend, but who really wants
to get into your pants, we know it, don't you?

save it for the guy who calls from fresno,
who only met you half an hour in vegas:
i believed it when you told me that;
i believe everything you tell me.

and save it for your mommy and daddy
who only call when we're making love.
save it for your girlfriends, who are
always looking for a fourth for an orgy.

since, however, i call or come
to visit you every single day,
there is something supererogatory
and degrading about being greeted with surprise.

please, therefore, cut that shit out.

-- Gerald Locklin

Long Beach, Calif.